



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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### Information Bulletin No. CA 2000-065

To: All Field Offices

From: DSD, Natural Resources

Subject: Fossil Management on Federal Lands

Attached is a draft report entitled "Assessment of Fossil Management on Federal and Indian Lands," developed as a response to the United States Senate's (Senate Report 105-227) request that the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with appropriate scientific, educational, and commercial entities, prepare a report assessing the need for a unified Federal policy on the collection, storage, and preservation of fossils.

The report recommends that federal fossil management would be enhanced by a comprehensive approach for protecting and managing these important resources. The report proposes that the following overarching principles should govern the management of federal fossil resources:

- Principle 1: Fossils on Federal Land are a part of America's heritage
- Principle 2: Most vertebrate fossils are rare
- Principle 3: Some invertebrate and plant fossils are rare
- Principle 4: Penalties for fossil theft should be strengthened
- Principle 5: Effective stewardship requires accurate information
- Principle 6: Federal fossil collections should be preserved and made available for research and public education
- Principle 7: Federal fossil management should emphasize opportunities for public involvement

California has significant fossil resources located throughout much of the state. These resources have received significant attention by the private sector. Many of the fossil resources are well known and collections are scattered throughout the country, from the New York Museum of Natural History (the Frick Collection from the Rainbow Basin Area, Barstow Field Area) to the University of California, Berkeley. Recently the first evidence of a ***Primate*** found in California was discovered in the Ridgecrest Field Area as a result of a grant from the National Geographic Society to the Raymond Alf Museum. Work continues at the site.

California's program is managed as a part of the Heritage Resources Program. State Archaeologist Russell Kaldenberg has been assigned collateral duties for this program as well as the California Indian Program. Activities related to Paleontology continue to be coded to 1050. Recently David Lawler joined the Division of Minerals. David is a professional paleontologist who will be assuming a substantial portion of the paleontology program in FY 2001. He has been assigned to represent the resource at the Paleontology and Cultural Resource Action Team (PACRAT) meetings and is the key contact for the paleontology portion of the Millennium Conference scheduled to be held in Barstow, California in May 2001.

Paleontological resources are important public land resources and we hope that this draft report will assist our vision in managing the resources. Also, please welcome David and call him at 916-978-4365 if you have any questions or suggestions about the paleontology program.

Should you have any questions or suggestions about the report please contact David at the above number or Russell Kaldenberg at 916-978-4635.

**Signed**  
**Robert W. Middleton**  
**Acting DSD, Natural Resources**

Authenticated  
Liza Raymundo  
Records Management

Note: Attachments will follow in separate covers. (hard copies)

2 Attachments

- 1 - Report of the Secretary of the Interior "Fossils on Federal and Indian Lands"
- 2 - First Announcement of Millennium Conference, Barstow, California